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"A TIME TO DIE."

WHO are included in the sentence of mortality? The promptings of natural feeling lead us to regard the stroke of death as ready to descend upon all except ourselves. The general declarations contained in the Scriptures, respecting the shortness and uncertainty of life, we are prepared to admit in the full extent of their meaning; and, it may be, our hearts are struck by the awful illustrations of them, which are furnished in the ravages of some formidable disease. When cholera, like a destroying angel, proceeding from what we fondly imagined to be its fastnesses and exclusive possessions in India, commenced its death march over the wide world, and when the continental nations were establishing their military cordons on their frontiers, and *we* were strictly enforcing our quarantine regulations, with the vain hope of arresting the progress of the invader, the panic was almost universal, and men were compelled to admit into their meditations at least the fear of approaching dissolution. The result is known.—Cholera arrived, and many found that the time of its prevalence was "a time to die." But the terrors of the scene were soon forgotten; and its warnings, alas! in too many instances, passed away without improvement. Many seemed to rest under the impression, that, on the retiring of this fell destroyer, there remained no longer any ground for the apprehension of mortality. The pressure of this heavy calamity being removed from their heart-strings, they considered further alarm to be unnecessary, and could hear no urgent call to preparation for their latter end. It appeared as if cholera in its retreat had carried off for ever "a time to die," leaving us all to luxuriate in the undisturbed enjoyment of terrestrial immortality. Multitudes were

and are actuated by the spirit of the unhappy convict, whom the dread of an opening eternity had bound down to the perusal of the New Testament; but who, on the arrival of a reprieve, cast aside the book, observing that *now* he needed not its consolations.

The ravages of Cholera have, in a great measure, ceased; but the grave is still open, and thousands are still hurried into its devouring jaws. Cholera may be said to have departed; but "a time to die" has not departed.

Death is among us, and on every side
 The messenger Jehovah's mandate bears,
 Now to the monarch 'mid his pomp and pride,
 And now to him who wields a state's affairs,
 On whose grave visage brood an empire's cares,
 Perchance in perilous hour! men stand aghast!
 Their stay is broken,—not a hope is theirs;
 Jehovah reigns. The dreaded danger's past.
 Men, nations rise and fall—His purpose holdeth fast.

How deep the infatuation which tempts the world to live and labour under some vague and delusive surmise that the shooting of one arrow has emptied the quiver of the Almighty. Has death recently swelled the number of its victims? Has the gloomy path that conducts to "the house appointed for all living," been of late unusually crowded? Have we witnessed a mixed multitude, composed of all ranks and ages, from the prince to the peasant—from the infant to the man of grey hairs, pressing to the dark and silent tomb? And are we secretly, and perhaps half unconsciously, cherishing the hope that this noble stream of life will cease to flow into the ocean of death. Vain and hopeless hope! The waters roll on in broad and rapid current, and no mortal arm can stop or retard their majestic course. Of the vials which have already discharged their sorrows and separations, we may say, in the language of the Apocalypse, "One woe is *past*;" but let us by no means forget what follows,—“And behold there come two woes more hereafter.” One mode of dissolution may, under a gracious Providence, be subjected to temporary suspension; one way of reaching our destination may seem to be blocked up; but there are a thousand avenues which all conduct with the same certainty to "the congregation of the dead." God has a thousand modes of changing man's countenance and carrying him away. In this light our mortality has been represented in some of the

most touching and beautiful passages which have ever been penned. "As for man," says the Psalmist, "his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more."—Ps. ciii. 14, 15. With similar fidelity and vividness, does Job, under his sufferings, paint the frailty of our earthly existence, when he says,—“Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not.”

On the subject of universal liability to death, however, there is no diversity of opinion; yet each individual is strangely haunted by the undefined notion that he will be exempted, in some way which it is impossible to determine, from the visit of the king of terrors. To make belief in our own mortality, as an event soon and certainly to occur, a principle of efficient practical operation, is an object of more difficult achievement than will be generally admitted. Ask me to believe, by wholesale, that death will overtake all men, and I will give the doctrine an easy and instantaneous reception. Ask me to believe that the friends who are dearest to my heart shall share in “the common lot;” and, though I may have to battle with a host of wishes and feelings arrayed on the opposite side, I can still exercise, in some degree, the required faith, and contemplate perhaps the prospective possibility of resignation. But ask me to believe that my own eyes shall be closed in death, that at no distant period this body which is now invigorated with life and health, shall moulder in the cold grave, while “the spirit,” separated from its clay tenement, “shall return to God who gave it,” and all my desires and aversions are at once up in arms against admitting the truth of so unwelcome a communication. It is true, indeed, my understanding is unable to impugn the veracity of him who assures me that I am “frail flesh and fleeting spirit;” but how often is the understanding, in its soundest and firmest decisions, overborne by wishes and affections, which, however unfounded, the heart refuses to surrender. Let him who questions the difficulty of allowing the fact of our own individual mortality to exert its salutary influence over our character and conduct, try to present before the eye of steady contemplation the scenery of his own death-chamber, in all its solemn realities; let him bring the boasted powers of philosophy to the work of retaining, as an object of calm consideration, his own parting struggle, that he may gather clusters of wisdom from the combination of affecting circumstances

which it exhibits; let him enter upon the task of surveying, with unshrinking heart, the fixed certainty of the separation of *his own soul* from *his own body*; and we triumphantly anticipate, on his part, the admission that it is no easy matter so to consider our latter end, as that we shall draw from it principles of vigorous and healthful moral action. To be able to drop a tear or heave a sigh over the *general* havoc of death, is a common enough acquirement; but to reflect wisely on the visit which that messenger shall make to ourselves, is of more rare occurrence. Hence it was the result of high attainment in religion, which enabled an eminent servant of God to say, with judgment and feeling, "I know that thou wilt bring ME to death, and to the house appointed for all living." Any man could have expressed this conviction respecting *his neighbours*, but it was only one possessing the deeply and thoroughly *exercised* mind of Job, that could express it respecting *himself*.

We are aware that to such views and representations it has been frequently objected, That the community would be wholly unfitted for the business of life, did they give themselves up to the gloomy and painful associations which are connected with the grave and eternity. But why are these associations gloomy and painful? Let us beware lest it is the secret consciousness of being unprepared for the momentous change, that surrounds the anticipation of death with unnumbered terrors, forcing our thoughts back whenever they attempt to approach the grisly king. If we are prepared, whence this awful *pain* and *gloom* which the objector alleges to constitute an essential element of meditation on the hour of our dissolution? If we are supported by the rod and staff of God, whence this withering of our strength, and this faintheartedness, at the very thought of passing through the valley of the shadow of death? Besides, is it conceived that the way of being ready for the coming of the Son of man, is to suspend all thought of our mortality, and engage all the energies of our souls on the perishable objects of time?—Our friend, we shall suppose, has determined on removing to a distant land; and though he has not been able to fix the precise day of his departure, he knows that it cannot be very remote. But we grieve to find him so excessively attached to his present situation, that he cannot bear the thought of leaving; and the consequence is, that he is making no preparation for the voyage—he has not arranged his affairs—and, though the vessel is shortly to sail, we have every reason to apprehend that the utter want of thought and care which he evinces concerning his destination, will render him miserable in

the land of his adoption. He is living among us, at present, as if he had resolved not to remove, and his entire want of consideration, in this instance, has brought him into derision with his enemies, and been a subject of grief and pain to his warmest friends. Now we venture to affirm that such conduct among men would be stamped with deep reprobation; and that, in the event of having decided on such a change as we have supposed, even our worldly-wise objector would spend some serious thought on the voyage itself, and the new circumstances into which it should introduce him, in order to make the necessary and suitable preparation;—nay, that all his business would be conducted with a view to that change, so as to guard his present interests, and neglect no lawful means of securing his future happiness. With the aid, therefore, of his own admitted principle of conduct, we drive his objection off the field. His provision for a worldly removal pronounces him before God and man to be a fool in neglecting to prepare for entering upon the eternal state; and should he, in defiance of all warning, persist in refusing to consider death, and prepare for death, the assent of his own mind will go along with the just judgment of God in giving him over to chains of eternal darkness. May we not, then, repeat the prayer of Israel's leader,—“Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!” There is “a time to die;” let us all prepare for that time.

There is “a time to die” to the righteous; and, oh, how sweet and peaceful is that time! They sleep in Jesus. They find the darkness of death dispelled by the light of the Sun of Righteousness. At even tide, it is light unto their souls. When death comes, it does not find them unprepared. One says, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” Another is enabled to go still further and express “a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better.” A third, at the moment of dissolution, addresses our adorable Emmanuel in the blessed words, “Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.” The believer *knows* that there is “a time to die;” and all the days of his appointed time he waits till his change come. Death he contemplates with solemnity, but without slavish fear. He rejoices that life and immortality are brought to light in the Gospel; his life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is his life, shall appear, he shall also appear with him in glory. He remembers the resurrection of our Lord, and he blesses him for the assurance, that them that sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him. “A time to die,” is then a happy time to the righteous.

There is also "a time to die," to the wicked; and that is an awful time. They may keep death from their thoughts, but they cannot prevent it from dissolving the connexion between their souls and bodies. Dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it. What heart will venture to trace the flight of the unpardoned, unsanctified spirit from its earthly tabernacle. It is too dreadful for imagination to conceive, or tongue to utter. Let us not attempt to raise the dark curtain which shrouds the horrors of the scene. It is enough to hear the tremendous assurance that *a soul is lost for ever!* Ah! the wicked find "a time to die," and they feel **THE SECOND DEATH.**

We have been led into these observations by reflecting on the unusually extensive mortality which has prevailed in Belfast, and over the country generally, during the last two months. We could furnish apposite illustrations from the scenes which have come under our own notice; but we prefer closing the present article with an exhibition of the contrast between two eminent individuals, in their last moments,—one chosen from the front ranks of infidelity, the other from those of Christianity. Let our readers ponder over the two pictures;—let them consider well their general features and minuter characteristics,—and say which is calculated for the mansions of the blessed, and which for the darkling regions of eternal woe. Let them also remember, that if they live the life of the infidel, there is little hope of their dying the death of the Christian.

"Shall I lead you," says Bishop McIlvaine, "to the horrible spectacle of Voltaire in the arms of death, and expecting, in a few moments, to stand at the bar of God. He has just returned from a feast of applause in the theatre, to be laid on a bed of death, in the agonies of an upbraiding conscience. The physician enters. 'Doctor,' said the apostle of infidelity, with the utmost consternation, 'I am abandoned by God and man. I will give you half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months' life.' The physician told him he could not live six weeks. 'Then,' said he, 'I shall go to hell.' His companions in guilt, D'Alembert, Diderot, and Marmontel, hasten to keep up his courage, but meet nothing but reproach and horror. In spite of the guard of infidels about him, he sends for the Abbé Gautier to come as soon as possible. In his presence, and that of other witnesses, he signs a recantation of infidelity, and professes to die in the church. It is sent to the Rector of St. Sulpice and the Archbishop of Paris for approval. The Abbé Gautier returns with it, but cannot enter.

Every avenue to the dying infidel is defended by those who had shared in his conspiracy against Christianity. They want to hide his terrors and their own shame. Now it is that D'Alembert, Diderot, and about twenty others of like character, who beset his apartment, never approach him but to hear their condemnation. 'Retire,' he often exclaims with execrations; 'it is you that have brought me to my present state! Begone! I could have done without you all, but you could not exist without me! And what a wretched glory have you produced me!' Then his conspiracy comes before him, and, alternately supplicating and blaspheming, he complains that he is abandoned by God and man, and often cries out, 'O Christ! O Jesus Christ!' *He is looking on him whom he pierced!* He is drinking the cup of trembling! the foretaste of the second death! The Mareschal de Richelieu flies from the scene, declaring it 'too terrible to be sustained.' The physicians, thunderstruck, retire; declaring 'the death of the impious man to be terrible indeed.' One of them pronounces that '*the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire.*'"

Contrast with this awful scene, the dying moments of the great and good John Howe.

"He discovered," says Doctor Calamy, "no fear of dying, but even when his end drew near, was very serene and calm. He seemed, indeed, sometimes to have got to heaven, even before he had laid aside that mortality which he had been long expecting to have swallowed up of life. It was observed, and is, I believe, to this day remembered by some of his flock, that in his last illness, and when he had been declining for some time, he was once in a most affecting, melting, heavenly frame at the communion, and carried out into such a ravishing and transporting celebration of the love of Christ, that both he himself and those who communicated with him were apprehensive that he would have expired in that very service.

"He would be very pleasant sometimes in his last sickness, and converse freely with such as came to visit him; and they were many of all ranks. Among the rest, Richard Cromwell (who was now grown old, and had lived many years retired from the world, since the time when Mr. Howe was his domestic chaplain) came to make him a respectful visit, and take his farewell of him before he died. There was a great deal of serious discourse between them. Tears were freely shed on both sides, and the parting was very solemn, as I have been informed by one who was present upon the occasion.

Many ministers, also, visited him, and he was very free in discourse with them, and talked like one of another world, and that had raised and uncommon hopes of that blessedness there, which his heart had been long set upon.

“He was most willing to die, and lay that clog (as he called his body) aside. Of this there is a plain proof that he once told his wife, that though he loved her as well as it was fit for one creature to love another, yet if it were put to his choice, whether to die that moment or live that night, and the living that night would secure the continuance of his life for seven years to come, he declared he would choose to die that moment. Being at last quite worn out, he finished his course with joy, April 2, 1705, and was translated into the calm and peaceable regions of the blessed above, where nothing but perfect charity and serenity reign for ever.” D.

THE OFFICE OF RULING ELDER.*

A VERY able and interesting volume on this subject has made its appearance in Glasgow. It is from the pen of the Rev. Doctor Miller of Princetown, New Jersey, America; and the argument is conducted with the usual talent, learning, acuteness, and research of that eminent theologian. Doctor Miller is well known as the unflinching advocate of sound orthodox doctrine, and he has proved himself the strenuous and successful defender of Presbyterian church order. We select from the volume before us the following passage which embraces testimonies relating to *the office of ruling elder* among the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Bohemian churches; hoping that a *sample* will induce many of our readers and brethren of the Secession to procure the work itself, and give it a deliberate perusal.

* *The warrant, nature, and duties of the office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church. By Samuel Miller, D. D. Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey; with an Introductory Essay by the Rev. William Lindsay, Glasgow.*

It has been the habit of zealous and high-toned Prelatists, for more than two centuries past, as well as of *some* Independents, to assert, that *ruling elders* were unknown in the Christian church until about the year 1541; that then Calvin invented the order, and introduced it into the church of Geneva. And some worthy men, of other denominations, have allowed themselves, with more haste than good advisement, to adopt and repeat the assertion. It is an assertion which, undoubtedly, cannot be made good; as the following testimonies will probably satisfy every impartial reader.

At how early a period the old Waldenses took their rise is uncertain. In some of their old Confessions of Faith, and other ecclesiastical documents, dated at the commencement, or soon after the commencement of the Reformation by Luther, they speak of their doctrine and order as having been handed down from father to son for more than five hundred years. But Reinerius, who himself lived about two hundred and fifty years before Luther, who had once resided among the Waldenses, but afterwards became one of their bitterest persecutors, seems to ascribe to that people a much earlier origin. "They are more pernicious," says he, "to the church of Rome than any other set of heretics, for three reasons:—1. Because they are older than any other sect; for some say that they have been ever since the time of Pope Sylvester, who was raised to the Papal chair in 314; and others say, from the time of the Apostles.* 2. Because they are more extensively spread than any other sect; there being scarcely a country into which they have not crept. 3. Because other sects are abominable to God for their blasphemies; but the Waldenses are more pious than any other heretics; they believe truly of God, live justly before men, and receive all the articles of the creed; only they hate the Church of Rome."

Now, John Paul Perrin, the well-known historian of the Waldenses, and who was himself one of the ministers of that people, in a number of places recognizes the office of elder, distinguished from that of pastor, or teacher, as retained in their churches. He expressly and repeatedly represents their Synods as composed of ministers and elders. The same writer tells us that, in the year 1476, the Hussites, being engaged in

* Reinerius flourished about A. D. 1250, more than 250 years before the Reformation; and, at that time, he speaks of the Waldenses as an *ancient people*, of too remote an origin to be traced with distinctness and certainty.

separating and reforming their churches from the Church of Rome, understood that there were some churches of the ancient Waldenses in Austria, in which the purity of the Gospel was retained, and in which there were many eminent pastors. In order to ascertain the truth of this account, they (the Hussites) sent two of their ministers, with two elders, to inquire and ascertain what those flocks or congregations were.*

The same historian, in the same work, speaks of the ministers and elders of the Bohemian churches.† Now the Bohemian brethren, it is well known, were a branch of the same people called Waldenses.‡ They had removed from Picardy, in the north of France, about two hundred years before the time of Huss and Jerome, to Bohemia, and there, in conjunction with many natives of the country, whom they brought over to their opinions, established a number of pure churches, which long maintained the simplicity of the Gospel. The undoubted existence of ruling elders, then, among the Bohemian brethren, affords in itself strong presumptive proof that the same class of officers existed in other branches of the same body. And accordingly a Synod, of which we have an account, as held in Piedmont in Italy, in 1570, is represented repeatedly as made up of "pastors and elders." Again, in the form of Government of the same people, in the chapter on Excommunication, we find the following direction respecting the disorderly, who refuse to listen to private admonition:—"Tell it to the church," that is, to the "guides whereby the church is ruled;" and that we may be at no loss who these "rulers" were, we are told in a preceding chapter that they were elders chosen from among the people for the purpose of governing, and informed that they were distinct from the pastors.

The testimony of Perrin and others is supported by that of M. Gillis, another historian of the Waldenses, and also one of their pastors. In the Confession of Faith of that people, inserted at length in the "Addition" to this work, and stated by the historian to have been the Confession of the ancient, as well as of the modern Waldenses, it is declared,—page 490, art. 31,—that "it is necessary for the church to have pastors, to

* History of the old Waldenses, part ii. book 1, chap. 10; book 2, chap. 4; book 5, chap. 7.

† Part ii. book 2, chaps. 9, 10.

‡ History of the Waldenses, 4to, 1655, published by order of Cromwell.

preach God's word, to administer the sacraments, and to watch over the sheep of Jesus Christ; and also elders and deacons, according to the rules of good and holy church discipline, and the practice of the primitive church."

Sir Samuel Moreland, who visited the Waldenses in the year 1656, and took unwearied pains to learn from themselves their history, as well as their doctrine and order, informs us, that besides their Synodical meetings, which took place once a-year, when all candidates for the pastoral office were commonly ordained, they had also consistories in their respective churches, by means of which pure discipline was constantly maintained.*

Accordingly, the Rev. Dr. Ranken, in his laboriously learned History of France, gives the following account of the Waldenses and Albigenses, whom he very properly represents as the same people. "Their government and discipline were extremely simple. The youth intended for the ministry among them, were placed under the inspection of some of the elder barbes, or pastors, who trained them chiefly to the knowledge of the Scriptures; and when satisfied of their proficiency, they received them as preachers, with imposition of hands. Their pastors were maintained by the voluntary offerings of the people. The whole church assembled once a year, to treat of their general affairs. Contributions were then obtained; and the common fund was divided, for the year, among not only the fixed pastors, but such as were itinerant, and had no particular district or charge. If any of them had fallen into scandal or sin, they were prohibited from preaching, and thrown out of the society.

The pastors were assisted in their inspection of the people's morals by elders, whom probably both pastors and people elected, and set apart for that purpose."†

Further; not only does Perrin speak of the ministers and elders of the Bohemian churches, thereby plainly intimating that they had a class of elders distinct from their pastors, or preachers; but the same thing is placed beyond the possibility of doubt or question by the Bohemian brethren themselves, who, in the year 1535, presented a Confession of their Faith to Ferdinand, king of Hungary and Bohemia, with a friendly and highly-commendatory preface by Luther; and who, a number of years afterwards, published their "Plan of Govern-

* History of the Evangelical Churches of Piedmont, book i. chapter viii.

† History of France, vol. iii. pages 203, 204.

ment and discipline," which contains the following paragraph :—

"Elders (*Presbyteri, seu Censores morum*) are honest, grave, pious men, chosen out of the whole congregation, that they may act as guardians of all the rest. To them authority is given (either alone or in connexion with the pastor) to admonish and rebuke those who transgress the prescribed rules, also to reconcile those who are at variance, and to restore to order whatever irregularity they may have noticed. Likewise, in secular matters, relating to domestic concerns, the younger men and youths are in the habit of asking their counsel, and of being faithfully advised by them. From the example and practice of the ancient church, we believe that this ought always to be done; see Exodus xviii. 21; Deuteronomy i. 13; 1 Corinthians vi. 2, 4, 5; 1 Timothy v. 17.

This they say, at the close, "is the ecclesiastical order which they and their forefathers had established among them for two hundred years:* which they derived from the word of God; which they maintained through much persecution, and with much patience; and which they had observed with much happy fruit to themselves, and to the people of God."†

And that all mistake might be precluded respecting the real import of the above stated clauses, the Bohemian historian and commentator, Comenius, makes the following remarks on the elders in question:—

"Presbyter, a Greek term, signifying the same with Senior in Latin, (an elder,) is applied by the apostles both to the pastors of the church, and to those who assisted them in taking care of the flock, who do not labour in the word and doctrine, —1 Timothy v. 17. Such are our elders; they are styled judges of the congregation, or censors of the people, and also ruling elders. I am not ignorant, indeed, that Hugo Grotius has laboured hard to prove, that in the apostles' days there were no other presbyters than pastors; and that he assigns a different meaning to the passage in 1 Timothy v. 17. Yet, inasmuch as he finally confesses, that although such elders of

* The "Plan of Government," from which the above extracts are made, was drawn up by their "General Synod" in 1616, and printed in 1632. When, therefore, they declare that they and their forefathers had enjoyed the same order for two hundred years, it carries back the date of this system to 1416, that is to the time of John Huss; and, of course, nearly a century before the birth of Calvin.

† Jo. Amos Comenii *Historia Fratrum Bohemorum Ratio Disciplinæ Ordinisque*, &c. 11. 56. 68.

the church as sit with the pastors in ecclesiastical judicatories, be an institution of human prudence, they are, nevertheless, very useful, and ought by all means to be retained; I hope no one will easily find any reasonable objection. To guard against abuses, he subjoins very judicious cautions, at the close of Chapter XI. of the book which he entitled, *De Imperio Summarum Protestatum circa Sacra*.*

In precisely the same manner are both the theory and practice of the Bohemian brethren understood by the celebrated Martin Bucer, a very learned Lutheran divine, whose fame throughout Europe induced Archbishop Cranmer to invite him to England, during the progress of the Reformation in that country, where he received patronage and preferment, and was held in high estimation. Bucer was a contemporary of the Bohemian worthies who published the exhibition of their faith and practice above quoted; and of course, had every opportunity of knowing both its letter and spirit. He speaks of it in the following terms:—

“The Bohemian brethren (Picardi†), who published a Confession of their Faith in the year 1535, with a preface by Luther, and who almost alone preserved in the world the purity of the doctrine and the vigour of the discipline of Christ, observed an excellent rule, for which we are compelled to give them credit, and especially to praise that God who thus wrought by them, notwithstanding those brethren are preposterously despised by some learned men. The rule which they observe was this:—besides ministers of the Word and Sacraments, they had, in each church, a bench or college of men, excelling in gravity and prudence, who performed the duties of admonishing and correcting offenders, composing differences, and judicially deciding in cases of dispute. Of this kind of elders Hilary (Ambrose) wrote when he said, “Therefore, the synagogue and afterwards the church had elders, without whose counsel nothing was done.”‡

It would seem difficult to deny or resist this testimony that

* *Annotationes ad Rationem Ordinis Fratrum Bohemorum ad cap. i. p. 68.*

† Bucer styles these worthy people, *Fratres Picardi*, in reference to their origin from the Waldenses, or rather the branch called Albigenses in France, to which those who migrated to Bohemia belonged. But the people to whom he refers are ascertained with unerring certainty by the “Confession of Faith” which he so precisely describes.

‡ *Scripta duo Adversaria Latomi, &c. in Cap. De Ecclesiae Auctoritate, p. 159.*

the Bohemian Brethren held to ruling elders, and actually maintained this class of officers in their churches. Could Bucer, whom Mr. Middleton, in his *Biographia Evangelica*, represents as “a man of immense learning,” and who is spoken of by Bishop Burnet as “perhaps inferior to none of all the Reformers for learning;”—could he have been ignorant, either of the real meaning of a public document, put forth in his own time, or of the public and uniform practice of a body of pious people, whom he seems to have regarded with so much respect and affection, as witnesses for God in a dark world? It cannot be imagined. And what gives additional weight to the testimony of this illustrious man is, that he seems to have had no interest whatever in vindicating this class of church officers; for it is not known that he ever had any special inducement, from a sense of reputation, or any other cause, to exert himself in maintaining them; and the latter part of his life was spent in England, in the service of the established church of that kingdom, in the bosom of which he died.

As a further confirmation of Bucer's judgment in reference to the Bohemian Brethren, the celebrated John Francis Budæus, an eminently learned Lutheran divine of Germany, of the seventeenth century, who gave an edition, with a large preface, of the work of Comenius, in which the history of the Bohemian Brethren, and their form of government, are published, evidently understands their plan in reference to the office of ruling elder, precisely as Bucer and other learned men have understood it. He employs the greater part of his preface in recommending this office. And although he does not seem prepared to allow that it existed as a separate office in the apostolic church, yet he thinks that, virtually, and in substance, it did make a part of the apostolic system of supervision and order. He thinks, moreover, that, without some such office, it is wholly impossible to maintain pure morals and sound discipline in the church of God; and that the Bohemian Brethren rendered a most important service to the cause of truth and piety in maintaining it in their ecclesiastical system.*

Luther in some of his early writings, had expressed an unfavourable opinion of the Bohemian Brethren; but, upon being more fully informed of their doctrine and order, and more especially of their provision for maintaining sound discipline, by means of their eldership in each congregation, he changed his

* Jo. Francisci Buddaei, *Praefatio de instauranda Disciplina Ecclesiastica*—Passim.

opinion, and became willing both to speak and to write strongly in their favour. Hence his highly commendatory preface to their "Confession of Faith," of which mention has been already made. And hence, at a still later period, the following strong expressions in favour of the same people.—"There hath not arisen any people since the time of the apostles, whose church hath come nearer to the apostolical doctrine and order than the Brethren of Bohemia." And again, "although these brethren do not excel us in purity of doctrine (all the articles of faith with us being sincerely and purely taken out of the word of God), yet in the ordinary discipline of the church which they use, and whereby they happily govern the churches, they go far beyond us, and are, in this respect, far more praiseworthy. And we cannot but acknowledge and yield this to them, for the glory of God, and of his truth; whereas our people of Germany cannot be persuaded to be willing to take the yoke of discipline upon them."*

It is presumed that no one, after impartially weighing the foregoing testimonies, will listen for one moment, with any respect, to the allegation that the plan of a bench of elders for ruling the church and conducting its discipline was invented by Calvin. But we may go further. The truth is, that instead of the Waldenses, or Bohemian Brethren taking this order of officers from Calvin, it may be affirmed that precisely the reverse was the fact. We have satisfactory evidence that Calvin took the hint from the Bohemian Brethren; and that the system which he afterwards established in Geneva, was really suggested and prompted by the example of those pious sufferers and witnesses for the truth, who had this class of officers in their churches long before Calvin's day.

CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.

To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.

"THAT the church (says the testimony of the United Associate Synod of the Scottish Secession Church) may fulfil the important trust of preserving the sacred oracles pure and entire, and teaching to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, especially when the authority of Scripture is pleaded in support of error and corruption, it is her incumbent duty to

* Joh. A. Comenii *Historia Bohem. Frat. sect.* 82.

exhibit a luminous and concise statement of those things which are understood by her to be taught in the Word of God. Though such a confession of her faith adds nothing to the authority of the truth, yet it displays and vindicates it, and supplies an instrument well adapted for instructing the ignorant, for establishing the wavering, for discovering the friends of the truth to one another, and uniting them in the fellowship and defence of the Gospel, for transmitting its doctrines and ordinances to the succeeding age, and for exhibiting the state of the attainments of the church in different periods; and thus enabling us, by comparing the various confessions which she has emitted, to mark her progress in the knowledge of the truth, or her declension from its purity. Indeed, no ecclesiastical society can exist without recognising in some way certain principles as the basis of their union, and the rule of their administrations and fellowship; and, on many accounts, it is better that these principles should be defined and methodized in some well-digested form of sound words, than that they should be left to the mutual understanding of the members of the church."

What could be more satisfactory or convincing than the preceding extract on the particular views of the subject at which it glances; and how many important topics are adverted to in so short a space? With such representations of the necessity, the scriptural warrant, and great usefulness of creeds and confessions, an honest unsophisticated mind would be ready to ask, What need is there for lengthened discussion on a subject so plain? Really there seems to me no need of it, when dealing with plain honest men, who have no interest or prejudice inducing them to look otherwise than straight before them. In fact, there is one argument, which in itself is amply sufficient to silence the whole host of objectors to creeds and confessions; and that is, that there is not a religious, or political, or philanthropic body, on earth, or indeed any body united by a common belief or practice, which has not a creed and confession. What do they hold in common,—what is their bond of union,—what, for example, is the creed and confession of a Bible society? Look to its fundamental principle, the common bond of the association, and see them there. In this case, the creed and confession are printed, and they may be signed by a number of members of the association; but this is not necessary to constitute a creed and confession. Let there be some common principles, or some common practice, and a tacit agreement to these among the members,—and the

creed and confession are as complete, so far as principle is concerned, as though they were signed, sealed, and delivered, on parchment, with all the technicalities of legal form. I am far from asserting that such a form of creed and confession would be so satisfactory as if it was committed to writing. All I say is, that every man who has connected himself with any society, has committed himself to the principle of creeds and confessions; and if, after having by his lips or his practice, expressed his adhesion to a creed he should refuse to unite with others in expressing the same in writing, his conduct, to say the least, would be very ignorant and inconsistent, or very suspicious.

Even such illustrations of the necessity and propriety of creeds and confessions are unnecessary for a plain, honest understanding; for the subject is made as clear as it can be by the statement of the fact, that every translation of the Bible is a confession of faith,—it is an expression of the sense in which the translators understood the Scriptures; and all who receive their translation as a faithful rendering of the original Hebrew and Greek, unite with them in the same confession of faith.

Were all agreed as to the meaning to be attached to the words and phrases of the translation, then one great reason for the drawing up of creeds and confessions would be removed; but, unfortunately, various motives influence men to take liberties with the language of Scripture, which would not be tolerated with any other composition. Hence the necessity of extreme precision, in the framing of creeds and confessions, to fix ideas with great accuracy, and, as far as possible, prevent misconception or perversion. Still, however, whatever be the number of confessions of faith classifying and expressing, with extreme accuracy, the doctrines of the Bible, let the advocates of creeds and confessions ever press on their opponents the stubborn fact, worth a thousand fine-spun arguments, that every translation of the Bible is the common confession of faith for all who acknowledge its accuracy. Ask any of them for an expression of his Christian faith, and he points you to the translation of the Bible, which he acknowledges to be a faithful expression of the mind of God.

For many years, Unitarians vainly attempted to force the common translation (King James' Bible) to express their creed; and many a twist and wrench they gave its tortured sentences. Still, however, all would not do. The rack, and wheel, and all the torture of their criticism, could not make it deny the Godhead of the Saviour. At length they were obliged to get

up a confession of faith for themselves, in the shape of a new translation of the New Testament, which displays such ignorance of Greek, or such perversion, that an eminent counsellor, on the trial now pending regarding Lady Hewley's fund, solemnly declared that if his own son, a boy on the fourth form, had been guilty of such stupidity, he would have ordered him to be soundly flogged. Let any one who wishes to see a masterly exposure of that perversion of Scripture to which Unitarians have given the name of a new translation, read the charge of Vice-Chancellor Shadwell on the subject, in the case of Lady Hewley's fund; and he will find there, too, ample refutation of the vain-glorious boast so often reiterated by Unitarians, that they are not trammelled like the orthodox with creeds and confessions.

Let me entreat those whose creed is a negation, to commence forthwith believing something positive and substantial; and let me entreat every one who is zealous for creeds and confessions, never to let out of his mind the great creed and confession,—“that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

PRESBYTER.

AMERICAN CAMP MEETING.

WE have heard much of American Camp Meetings, in this country. They are usually represented as scenes of religious extravagance. That much of this is true, we are prepared to admit, and to account for; but that they are all of this character, is too much to credit, and that no good is done at them, is contradicted by impartial testimony. We subjoin, from the New-York Observer, the following account of the Rev. Andrew Reed, of London, at a Camp Meeting held by the American Baptists, at the Northern Neck, in Northumberland County. Mr. Reed was one of the gentlemen deputed last year by the English Independents, to represent them at the General Assembly of the American Presbyterians; and Mr. Reed is a man well known for literature and talents, and by no means inclined to extravagance of any kind.

“The Rev. Mr. Reed, a Congregational minister from London, arrived on the ground on the fifth day of the meeting, and was invited to preach the next at 11 o'clock. The brethren were not without fears that his visit might be calculated to

check the state of feeling that existed. Accustomed to the forms and etiquette of a large city, and unacquainted with the manners and feelings of a congregation like ours, it was feared that he would not enter into the design and spirit of the meeting. After considerable persuasion he consented to preach, and he had not proceeded far before every fear on the part of the brethren subsided. His text was in Acts iii. 19, 'When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' The sermon was chaste, evangelical, pathetic, and powerful. Gradually growing in interest and pathos, its conclusion produced the most powerful effect. For about ten minutes the services were entirely suspended, and nothing but *weeping heard from ministers and congregation.*"

PETITION TO THE LEGISLATURE,

For discountenancing the customary use of Distilled Spirit.

WE give space with great pleasure to the following draft of a petition to the British Legislature, which is now in course of signature by the friends of temperance. It is a very important and interesting document, and we are at a loss to conceive how any of its statements can be controverted. The march of public sentiment, on behalf of temperance, has been most rapid; and it is going onward with more decision and greater strength than ever. Mr. Buckingham has given notice of a bill for the 9th of April, on the subject of licenses and the classification of public houses, with a view to promote temperance. The merits of his bill we do not discuss; the petition makes no reference to it. But it is exceedingly desirable, that the opportunity thus presented should be improved to the utmost, by showing, through petitions, what is the opinion of a numerous and influential portion of the British public, regarding distilled spirit, and the duty of the legislature to use their best efforts for banishing it from all customary use. Let truth be honestly and perseveringly pressed upon the attention of the British legislature; and, though there may be much ignorance and self-interest, even among our rulers, to oppose reformation, yet among them, as well as others, prejudice will give way,—some will be found honest enough to sink considerations of self-interest before convictions of duty; and, in the end, legislation must bend to public opinion and be directed by it.

The African slave trade had its day; and even good men

were dead to its horrible atrocity. But Clarkson, Wilberforce, and other great heroes of humanity, arose; the public mind was illuminated, and public feeling regenerated; and that which, but a few years previously, had been esteemed a respectable Christian calling, was branded by an indignant nation as an atrocious crime, to be punished by death.

Thus was the African slave trade crushed; but slavery continued to flourish still, even in the presence, and under the sanction, of the very men who had denounced the trade in slaves as a crime worthy of death. Once more the friends of liberty girded themselves to their work—once more the mighty machinery of moral reformation was brought to bear on the public mind—the spirit of liberty awoke from the sleep of ages—Britons beheld, with honest indignation, their reproach and crime, and rushing forward in one unanimous, resistless onset, slavery fell before them.

The system of lottery gambling had its day too; and Government were not ashamed to legalize a system of the basest fraud, in the profits of which they largely partook. But the public at length opened their eyes to the imposition, by which they had been cheated and befooled; and where is the man now, even among the many godless gamblers who have obtained seats in the British legislature, that dare propose, in the House of Commons or of Lords, the establishment of a lottery? And why should not spirit-drinking sink, as lotteries, and slavery, and the slave trade, have sunk, to eternal infamy? Is it because it is less pernicious, less bloody, less extensively ruinous than they? Spirit-drinking has destroyed more property in a single year than the lottery system in the whole period of its detestable existence; and, notwithstanding all the aggravated horrors of slavery,—and aggravated they have been beyond all powers of description or imagination,—what are they in comparison with the horrors of spirit-drinking? While slavery numbered its victims by hundreds, spirit-drinking counted millions; while slavery separated for a few brief years of life the wife and husband, the parent and child, spirit-drinking tears them asunder for ever; while slavery lashed the body with its bloody scourge, spirit-drinking lashes the soul with the scourge of remorse, as a foretaste of the worm which never dies; while slavery bound the body of her victim with fetters, and trampled him down to the dust of death in a sore and grievous bondage, the redeemed soul was free, and rose at length from the prostrate mutilated corpse—rose on angels' wings up to the bosom of her God. But spirit-drinking, while wasting away happi-

ness and health, and degrading her victim beneath the beasts that perish, ruins the immortal soul, inflicts on the wretch whom she tortures, the dispositions of a demon and the tortures of the damned, and hurls him at death into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, whence the smoke of his torment shall ascend up for ever and ever.

What does the public mind want but awakening on such a subject? Let the public eye but see, and the public heart feel what spirit-drinking is in all its deadly forms, and there can be no doubt that the same giant strength of public sentiment, which exterminated slavery and the slave trade, will so entirely overturn and destroy the whole spirit-drinking system, that the sons of coming years shall look back to it as Lot looked from Zoar on Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plain.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of, &c.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,

That, as appears in evidence before a Committee of your Honourable House, drunkenness, with its attendant evils, prevails to an alarming extent throughout the United Kingdom; and that, in Ireland, where it presents itself in a most aggravated form, it is caused almost entirely by distilled spirit. It is in evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on Drunkenness, that, while in Ireland millions of her people are in a state of most pitiable destitution, more than six millions sterling are annually expended on distilled spirit, chiefly by the poor; and that, as a necessary consequence, poverty, disease, and crime, have so increased, that three-fourths of the abject poverty and crime of the country, and one-half of the disease prevalent among the lower classes, are, by competent witnesses, attributed directly to intemperance. The brutalizing influence of distilled spirit is universally acknowledged; it sears the conscience and hardens the heart; it is a barrier in the way of improvement; and the friends of education, religion, and all benevolent effort, too often strive against it in vain.

It has also been established by the incontrovertible evidence of hundreds of the most eminent medical practitioners, and by very long and extensive experience, that distilled spirit is entirely useless to persons in health, and directly and positively noxious to the human constitution, body and mind; so that all use of distilled spirit, as a customary beverage, and all sale of it for such use, is MORALLY WRONG, and, consequently, cannot be politically right.

It has been farther established, in evidence, that the great source of drunkenness in the United Kingdom is the sanction given by the influential portion of the community to the customary use of so seductive, powerful, and pernicious an instrument of evil as distilled spirit,—very many captivating qualities being falsely attributed to it by their precept and example, and very many fatal customs upheld and perpetuated, which trained the present generation of drunkards, and

which will have another ruined generation ready to occupy their place when they are gone.

Your petitioners deeply regret that the whole of this destructive system has been hitherto sanctioned by the British Legislature, which largely participates in promoting the evil, not only by legalizing a traffic MORALLY WRONG, but directly producing drunkenness in the army and navy, by the distribution of spirit rations and the establishment of canteens; while a most pernicious lesson is thus taught, and a most destructive example set to the whole community.

Your petitioners, therefore, pray your Honourable House immediately to adopt such measures as shall, in the present depraved state of public sentiment and practice, most effectually tend to exclude distilled spirit from customary use as an article of diet.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE DR. MORRISON.

DR. MORRISON, the distinguished Chinese missionary, died at Canton in China, on the first of August, 1834, in the fifty-third year of his age. He was the first Protestant missionary to China—the founder of the Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca—the interpreter for the East India Company in all official transactions with the Chinese—the translator of the Scriptures into the language of China—and the London Missionary Society's faithful missionary to that vast portion of the heathen world, for the period of twenty-seven years.

Dr. Morrison, like Dr. Carey, owed nothing of his literary eminence to the advantages of birth, of hereditary affluence, or of early education. Like Dr. Carey, he was of humble descent, and brought up as an apprentice to a laborious manual occupation. He was born of poor, but pious and industrious parents, at Morpeth, Northumberland, on the fifth of January, 1782. Though he was born in England, his father was a Scotchman, a native of Dunfermline. At Newcastle-upon-Tyne, whither his parents removed, he received some elementary instruction in English, writing, and arithmetic, in a school taught by an uncle. When very young, he was apprenticed to his father, whose occupation was that of a last and boot-tree maker. The Church's glorious Head, however, had destined him to be a chosen vessel to bear his name to the heathen; and, under the auspices of Providence, the native talents of young Morrison carried him aloft above the disadvantages of his early condition.

At the age of sixteen, he was brought under deep religious impressions, through catechetical exercises conducted by the

Rev. Mr. Hutton. An overwhelming sense of the sins of his youth took hold of his conscience. He was convinced of his utter ruin by nature; but it pleased God, in answer to long-continued and agonizing prayer, to reveal his Son in him, the hope of glory. The following account of this part of his spiritual history is from Dr. Morrison himself.—“The instructions which I received in my father’s house, and from the ministers of religion in connexion with the Scotch churches in Newcastle, terminated in leading me to the Lord Christ for salvation and happiness. I found joy and peace in believing the truth. The hope and anticipation of heaven yielded me unspeakable delight, and I longed to make others as happy as myself. I desired to win souls to Christ, that they might become heirs of everlasting bliss. *Study then became my delight; and, with slender means, and great physical effort, I snatched many hours from labour and sleep.* I made some ineffectual and discouraging application to ministers for direction, and my aged mother wondered to what her son’s zeal and assiduity would eventually grow, and feared lest I should be removed from her.”

On new year’s day, 1799, young Morrison voluntarily entered on a systematic course of religious reading and study. He commenced also, on the same day, a diary for the purpose of marking and recording his religious experience,—a method which is stated to have been eminently instrumental in forming and fostering those mental and moral habits, which afterwards contributed so largely to his activity and usefulness in his missionary work.

The heart of Morrison was thus early touched by the Spirit of God; and, in the midst of poverty and daily labour, he vigorously put forth the eager pantings of genius after knowledge and intellectual effort. Happy was it for him, that the lofty aspirings of his mind were under the guidance of God’s good Spirit. Probably with the office of the Christian ministry in view, as well as for the sake of mental culture and gratification, he commenced, in 1801, the study of Latin, Hebrew, and Theology, under the direction of the Rev. W. Laidler, a presbyterian minister. His teacher estimated aright the abilities and piety of his pupil; and, in 1803, on the recommendation of Mr. Laidler, Morrison was admitted, by the committee and tutors, as a student in Hoxton academy, now Highbury College. He entered on the study of the various branches of sacred and other literature with characteristic earnestness and vigour. While he plied his studies with diligence, he set himself also

to learn practically the work of an evangelist, by preaching to the poor. "I remember," said he, "shedding, in secret, tears of joy, when, with feelings of deep responsibility, I was sent for the first time to preach concerning Jesus to the poor people in St. Luke's workhouse. The first pulpit I ever preached in was that which then stood in their chapel." No school is so good for training the minister, as being early set to work to make known the Gospel to the poor.

Previous to entering college, it appears that Morrison had thoughts of becoming a missionary to the heathen. These thoughts now ripened into mature determination. In May, 1804, he offered himself to the London Missionary Society, and his offer meeting a welcome acceptance, he was transferred for his future education to the Mission College at Gosport, then under the superintendence of the late Dr. Bogue.

His destination as missionary to China being determined by the directors of the London Missionary Society, it became necessary that he should qualify with an especial view to that field. The project of the mission to China first originated with the late Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. treasurer of the London Missionary Society; and that honoured individual treated Morrison with the warmest friendship. Dr. Morrison himself was accustomed to say that his destination by the Society to China, was in answer to his own prayers that the Redeemer would station him in some missionary post, where difficulties were most formidable—nay, to human appearance, insurmountable. China, above all countries in the pagan world, presented exactly such a position.—No Protestant had ever planted a missionary foot on that immense territory of idolatry; the language was, beyond all others, the most difficult; and foreigners were rigidly interdicted, by a jealous government, from travelling through the country, and from holding free intercourse with the inhabitants.

His missionary preparations in general, and his Chinese education in particular, he prosecuted with a zeal and diligence proportioned to the novelty and difficulties of the undertaking. From August, 1805, to the close of 1806, he was closely occupied in the study of the Chinese language, with the assistance of a native teacher, named *Yong-sam-Tak*. At the same time, he left untouched no department of knowledge likely to facilitate his missionary intercourse with the people. While studying the language of the country to which he devoted his missionary life, he laboured to increase his acquaintance with all subjects of general literature and science, and

employed a considerable portion of his time in the study of surgery and medicine, passing through a regular course of lectures and hospital attendance.

Having completed his preparatory course, Dr. Morrison received his appointment to China, and was publicly ordained as a missionary on the 8th of January, 1807, the services being conducted by the Rev. Drs. Waugh and Nicol, and Messrs. Townsend, Buck, and Burder. On the 16th he took leave of the Directors of the London Missionary Society at the Mission-house, a parting address being delivered by Dr. Waugh; and on the 21st he embarked at Gravesend for Philadelphia, and on the 10th of May, 1807, he sailed from Philadelphia for Canton in China, where he arrived on the 4th of September in the same year.

On his arrival, Dr. Morrison obtained a lodging in the factory of the American agents, Messrs. Milner and Bull. During the first sixteen months, he was accustomed, in the most self-denied manner, to spend the whole day with his Chinese teacher, studying, eating, and sleeping in a room under ground, adopting the Chinese costume, foregoing the pleasures of intercourse with his countrymen, and taking his food with the Chinese with whom he associated, for the purpose of qualifying himself for speaking the language. Such was his success, that, notwithstanding all difficulties, he was, in eighteen months, esteemed the best Chinese scholar in the factories. On the 19th of February, 1809, he was appointed interpreter to the East India Company, and on the following day was united in marriage, at Macao, to the daughter of John Morton, Esq.

China being closed against foreigners, it was impossible to preach the Gospel from place to place as in other countries; but the Chinese being a literary people, equal, if not superior, to any in the world, the PRESS might, under God, prove the effective, perhaps the only immediately effective instrument in assailing the strongholds of Paganism. Accordingly, he devoted himself still more assiduously to the cultivation of the Chinese language in all its niceties, both vulgar and learned, and entered on the stupendous undertaking of composing a Chinese grammar, a dictionary, and a translation of the Scriptures. In September, 1811, he presented a copy of his Chinese grammar to Lord Minto, Governor of Bengal,—a work which was printed in 1815, at the Mission Press of Serampore, at the expense of the Bengal government. In 1811, he published a Chinese translation of the Acts of the Apostles,

on the presentation of which to the British and Foreign Bible Society, £500 were voted by that body towards translating and printing the Scriptures in Chinese. In the same year, also, he prepared a Chinese translation of Luke, a tract on the Way of Salvation, and a Catechism on the first principles of the Christian religion. On the Lord's day, during that year, he preached at Canton, in his own house, in their own language, to as many of the Chinese as could be induced to hear him.

The year 1812 was remarkable for the edict issued by the Emperor of China, prohibiting, under the severest penalties, the propagation of the Christian faith.

In September, 1813, Dr. Morrison was able to announce to the London Missionary Society, that he had completed the Chinese translation of the New Testament, and that two thousand copies were printed for distribution. Eleven thousand copies, in six successive editions, were afterwards put in circulation among the Chinese. The same year Dr. Morrison was joined by the late Dr. Milne, who, as soon as he acquired the language, assisted in the translation of the Old Testament, together with translations of several Christian authors.

By the time Dr. Morrison had finished his Chinese and English Dictionary, a work of astonishing ability and labour, it was put to press at Macao, in 1814, at the expense of the East India Company. It fills three large quarto volumes; it was brought out in six successive parts, and the printing occupied a period of nine years.

While carrying forward this great literary undertaking, Dr. Morrison constantly endeavoured the conversion of the Chinese to whom he had access. A few forsook their idols; and, in 1814, he had the unspeakable satisfaction of baptizing Tsae-a-Ko, the first Chinese convert.

In the year 1816, an embassy, under Lord Amherst, was sent by the British Government to the court of China. To this embassy Dr. Morrison was appointed interpreter and secretary, a post for which he was, beyond all others, qualified, by his knowledge of the Chinese language and customs. He accompanied the embassy to Peking, the capital, in July, 1816; and on the first of January following, he returned to Canton. Of this expedition Dr. Morrison published an account.

In 1818, Dr. Morrison founded the Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca, subscribing himself £1000, and obtaining large contributions among his friends. In 1822 when he visited this seminary, he projected, and partly executed the plan of a new Institution at Singapore, to co-operate with the college at

Malacca, with the view of creating throughout the Chinese empire a desire to acquire a knowledge of the English language, in order that our Christian literature should be laid open to the mind of China, and that free access should be obtained for the preaching of Christ.

Dr. Morrison's celebrity in Chinese literature had by this time pervaded the literary world. Testimonies of public respect were rendered by several literary bodies in Europe and America; and the University of Glasgow, in 1818, did themselves the honour of conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, accompanying the act with expressions of high respect for the translator of the Scriptures into the language of China.

The greatest of all Dr. Morrison's triumphs was achieved in 1819. That year, November 25, he *announced to the Christian world, that he had completed the Chinese translation of the word of God.* The publication of this extended to sixteen volumes octavo. The amount of assistance which he received from Dr. Milne, comprised Deuteronomy, the historical books, and Job. The work was published at Malacca. Leang-a-fa, a convert of Dr. Milne, and baptized by him, was the printer.

Of the magnitude and importance of this work, general readers may form some conception from the fact that every word in the Chinese language, unlike all others, requires a distinct character to express it, that, up to the period of Dr. Morrison's arrival on the frontiers of China, that language was so formidable to foreigners, that a complete knowledge of it was deemed next to inaccessible, and that China contains an intelligent and educated population of 360,000,000 of pagan idolators.

During the part of the year he lived at Canton, he used his house as a chapel, and officiated in the English factory when there was no chaplain. At Macao, where he spent the other half of each year, he preached twice on the Lord's Day in English, and twice in Chinese. Of the Chinese, a few became converts, were baptized by him, and added to the fellowship of his little church. Five became native missionaries, going out and preaching Christ to their countrymen, and teaching from house to house in China, as Dr. Morrison stated in one of his letters, "even to the very walls of Peking."

In 1821, Mrs. Morrison died, leaving a son and daughter. On the 9th December, 1823, Dr. Morrison sailed for England, where he arrived on the 20th March, 1824. Before leaving China, he had the unspeakable gratification of ordain-

ing LEANG-A-FA, who, with the other senior native missionary, were converts of Dr. Milne, to the work of an evangelist. It would appear that there are at least seven native missionaries, as the first fruits of the London Missionary Society's labours in China, preaching to their countrymen the unsearchable riches of Christ.

In England Dr. Morrison was received with becoming respect by persons of all ranks and denominations. He preached, before the London Missionary Society, at its annual meeting, a sermon, which was afterwards published, from Phil. iii. 8,—“I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.” Being introduced at court to the King, as the first Protestant missionary to China, he presented his Majesty with a copy of his Chinese translation of the Bible.

In 1826, Dr. Morrison, having united himself to a second wife, Miss Armstrong, of Liverpool, who with five children survives him, embarked once more for China, the chosen land of his missionary life and destined to be the land of his death. The reformed parliament of the United Kingdom, having thrown open to the community at large the Chinese trade, formerly the monopoly of the East India Company, it became necessary to put the British commercial establishment in Canton under entirely new regulations. To superintend the trade with the Chinese, Lord Napier was sent out by the British government, and Dr. Morrison was appointed to an office similar to that which he filled under the East India Company. Lord Napier died soon after his arrival in China, nor did Dr. Morrison survive his appointment many days. On receiving the King's appointment, Dr. Morrison went up to Canton on the 21st of July. He suffered much on the way, and after his arrival he continued weak and pained. “On the first of August,” says his son, in the letter announcing his death, “his weakness and pain were extreme, and we were preparing for his return to Macao. Thither he indeed went the next day, but it was his mortal part alone that went; for on that night, the 1st of August about 10 o'clock, after but half an hour of immediate apprehension, he peacefully fell asleep.”

Dr. Morrison's son is now in his 21st year, and is able to carry forward his father's missionary labours in the Chinese language.

On intelligence reaching London of Dr. Morrison's death, a special meeting of the Board of Directors was convened, when the following becoming testimony of their affectionate

revelation for his memory was ordered to be recorded in their books:—Resolved, “That, in receiving the afflictive intelligence of the decease of the Rev. Dr. Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, the Directors bow with devout submission to the will of the Most High.” “That they deeply feel the loss which has been sustained by this and kindred institutions in the removal of their esteemed fellow-labourer, whose able, indefatigable, holy, and benevolent exertions, have been, during a period of twenty-seven years, devoted to the spiritual benefit of the chief nations of South Eastern Asia, and through whose instrumentality, in an eminent degree, by the Divine blessing, the millions of China have the means of reading in their own tongue—the entire volume of Divine Revelation.”

In the death of Dr. Morrison who indeed feels not that a loss has been sustained by vast China, and by the whole Christian world? Populous China is still under the power of Satan, and knows not her benefactor; but she shall yet bless the name of the man who, Baptist like, “prepared the way of the Lord.” The obstacles which oppose the entrance of Christianity into China, are immensely more difficult to be surmounted than any barrier presented by her celebrated wall; but the Redeemer levels mountain difficulties and makes them as a plain before the feet of his messengers. The great King has but to give the word in China, and great shall be the company of them that shall proclaim it. Their sound shall go out through the whole of that vast empire, and their words to the utmost limits of its provinces. Already there several encouraging symptoms indicate that the kingdom of God is at hand. The country which was once inaccessible is now become more open; and the people, who were once deemed as much opposed to all intercourse with foreigners as their jealous government, are now found to be free and social. Within these few years the enterprising Gutzlaff, in sailing round the coasts for the purpose of distributing the Word of God and Christian tracts in the Chinese language, every where found the people eager to receive books, and capable of reading them. On the frontiers of China, for the last quarter of a century, there has been an immense accumulation of means as in some mighty reservoir; they occupy a highly favourable vantage position; and they seem but to await the outpouring of the Spirit from on high to flow forth, as streams, over that great country, carrying healing, and life, and salvation to its mighty population.

LUTHER. .

I MUST PRAY DIFFERENTLY.

SOME time ago I felt strongly the necessity of praying *more*. Now I feel that I must not only pray more, but *differently*. I find that *quality* is to be considered in praying as well as *quantity*, and indeed the former more than the latter. We learn from Isaiah Chap. i. that it is possible to make many prayers, or to multiply prayer, as it is in the margin, and not be heard. The Scribes and Pharisees made long prayers, but their much praying availed them nothing; while the single short petition of the publican was effectual to change his entire prospects for eternity. It was because it was a prayer of the right *kind*. It is a great error to suppose that we shall be heard for our much speaking. Let me, however, say, that while length is not by itself any recommendation of prayer, yet we have the highest and best authority for continuing a long time in prayer. We know who it was "that rising up a great while before day," departed into a solitary place, and there prayed; and of whom it is recorded in another place that he "continued all night in prayer to God." Certainly they should spend a great deal of time in prayer, who are instructed to "pray without ceasing." It is in the social and public worship of God that long prayers are out of place.

But to return from this digression. I must pray differently; and I will tell you one thing which has led me to think so,—I find that I do not pray *effectually*. I do not obtain what I ask, though I ask for the right sort of things. If I asked for temporal good, and did not receive it, I should know how to account for it. I should conclude that I was denied in mercy; and that my prayer, though not answered in kind, was answered in better kind. But I pray for spiritual blessing—for what is inherently and under all circumstances good, and do not obtain it. How is this? There is no fault in the hearer of prayer—no unfaithfulness in God. The fault must be in the offerer. I do not pray aright. The conclusion is that I must pray differently.

I find, moreover, that I do not pray as they did in old time, whose prayers were so signally answered. When I compare my prayers with those of the Patriarchs, especially with that of Jacob; and with the prayers of the prophets, those, for instance, of Elijah and Daniel; when I compare my manner of making suit to the Saviour with the appeals made to him by the blind men, and by the woman of Canaan; and, above all, when I

lay my prayers alongside of His, who "offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears," I perceive such a dissimilarity, that I *thence* conclude I must pray differently.

But in what respects?

1. I must not speak to God at a distance. I must *draw near* to him. Nor that alone. I must stir myself up to *take hold* of him. Is. lxiv. 7. Yea, I must take hold of his strength, that I may make peace with him. Is. xxvii. 5. I have been satisfied with *approaching* God. I must, as it were, *apprehend* him.

2. I must not only take hold of God in prayer, but I must *hold fast* to him, and not let him go except he bless me. So Jacob did. There were two important ingredients in his prayer,—faith and perseverance. By the one he took hold of God; by the other he held fast to him, till the blessing was obtained.

3. I must be more affected by the subjects about which I pray. I must join tears to my prayers. Prayers and tears used to go together much more than they do now. Hosea says that Jacob "wept and made supplication." Hannah wept while she prayed. So did Nehemiah, and David, and Hezekiah; and God, in granting the request of the last mentioned, uses this language: "I have heard thy prayer, *I have seen thy tears.*" But a greater than all these is here. Jesus offered up prayers "with strong crying and tears." It is thought by some that men must have been more addicted to tears then than they are now; but it is my opinion that they *felt* more, and that is the reason they *wept* more. Now I must feel so as to weep; not by constraint, but in spite of myself. I must be so affected, that God shall see my tears, as well as hear my voice—and in order to being so affected I must meditate. It was while David *mused* the fire burned; and then he spake with his tongue in the language of prayer. And we know that that which melted his heart affected his eye, for in the same Psalm, the 39th, he says, "hold not thy peace at my tears."

4. There are other accompaniments of prayer which I must not omit. *Nehemiah* not only wept and prayed, but also *mourned*, and *fasted*, and *made confession*. Why should not I do the same?

5. I must *plead* as well as pray. My prayers must be more of the nature of *arguments*; and I must make greater use than I have ever done of certain pleas. There is one derived from the *character* of God. "For thy *name's sake* pardon

mine iniquity. Have mercy on me, *according to thy loving-kindness.*" Another is from the *promises* of God. "Hath he said and shall he not do it, or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good?" Another is drawn from the past doings of God. "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old." I must also plead *Christ* more in my prayers. The argument is drawn out to our hands by Paul: "He that spared not his own Son, *how shall he not* with him also freely give us all things?"

6. But again I must *cry* unto the Lord. Crying expresses more than praying. It expresses earnest, fervent prayer. This is what they all used to do. They *cried* to God. The Psalmist says, "I cried with my *whole heart.*" I must cry with my whole heart—yea *mightily*, as even the Ninevites did, else those heathen will rise up in the judgment and condemn me.

I must *seek* the Lord in prayer, feeling as did Job when he said, "Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!" And this I must do; as Judah is once said to have done, with my "whole desire." Yea, I must *search* for him with all my heart. I must even *pour out my heart* before him as the Psalmist on one occasion exhorts. I must "keep not silence, and give him no rest," as Isaiah directs; "night and day praying *exceedingly*," as Paul says he did.

And I must pray *in the Holy Ghost*, as Jude exhorts. We need the Spirit to help our infirmities, and to make intercession for us. Nor should we be satisfied with any prayer, in which we have not seemed to have his help.

7. Finally, I must alter and alter my prayers, till I get them right; and I must not think them right until I obtain the spiritual blessings which they ask. If I pray for more grace, and do not get it, I must pray differently for it till I do obtain it.

Oh, if Christians prayed differently, as well as more, what heavenly places our closets would be! What interesting meetings prayer meetings would be! What revivals of religion we should have! What a multitude of souls would be converted! What joyful tidings we should hear from our missionary stations and from the heathen world! Oh what times we should have! The Millenium would be on us before we knew it.

And because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of *truth*, the offering of a different kind of prayer for the Spirit would do

more to put down error than all other means which can be resorted to. The preachers of truth cannot put it down without the aid of the Spirit of truth.

Let us then pray differently. Let us at least *try*; I am sure it is worth the effort. Let every one who reads this resolve "*I will pray differently.*"—*New York Observer.*

DANGERS AND TYRANNY OF FASHION.

THE first general danger is that of vitiating and perverting the mind. This applies especially to some of the more public and popular amusements of the day, to the recreations of large parties and assemblies. The youth is there ushered into notice, and exposed to the dangers either of attention or neglect, both of which may do equal injury. In the one case a hurtful vanity may be awakened; in the other a no less hurtful envy. The good and kind affections may be sacrificed for a matter of dress, or of etiquette. The simplicity of the character may be lost in love of admiration. An odious and ugly affectation may deform the manners and deprave the mind. But what is worse than all this, there is a danger of a miserable, slavish, and sinful bondage to the world's opinions and fashions. It is too often forgotten, amidst scenes of fascinating amusement, that life has any higher object, and that the charms of inward virtue and piety are brighter than all outward show; it is too often forgotten, that there is a great and good Being ever with us, whose favour is better than life and all its pleasures. Fashion erects its shrine, and calls its blind and deluded votaries, and they bow down with a homage as base and idolatrous as if they worshipped an image. Opinion reigns over the crowds that throng the places of fashionable recreation; and there are many who are more anxious to please their fellow-being than to please their Maker—who would shrink more from violating the etiquette of the world than the command of the Almighty. The curse and blight of temptation never descends more awfully than when it thus comes amidst smiles and gaiety, amidst the forms of civility and fashion, and the sounds of music and pleasure. A being on whom the law of fashion has done its work, who lives only in the opinion of others and in an outward show—a being such as Chesterfield has described, with repetition and detail that are sickening and loathsome, notwithstanding the unequalled ease and spirit of his language—a

being actuated by only one desire, and that, to please—by only one care, and that for the exterior of life—such a being, whether man or woman, is as utterly, though not as visibly, degraded from the rank of humanity, as the sensualist and the profligate; and if sensuality and profligacy do not set their mark upon such a one, it will only be—because they are not the fashion!—*Christian Examiner.*

THE LATE JOHN BARNETT, ESQ.

THOUGH it is unnecessary to give any detailed account of an individual who has so long occupied a prominent place in society, and whose character so many have had opportunities of appreciating, yet a slight notice of his peculiar excellencies is not only due to his memory, but may be acceptable to many, as it may cherish their own recollections, and accord with their own feelings on this mournful occasion.

It should not be overlooked, in estimating his character, that he was of honourable descent,—his father's ancestors having come from England in the reign of Elizabeth, from whom they received a grant of land in County Down; while his mother was of the same family with John Livingston, one of the earliest Presbyterian ministers in Ireland, who was lineally descended from the earl of Linlithgow, and related to several others of the Scottish nobility. He also succeeded at an early period of life to his patrimonial property,* which had been in the possession of the family for upwards of 200 years. Notwithstanding these flattering advantages, however, in addition to the respectability of his acquired fortune, he was singularly indifferent to the artificial and showy distinctions of rank, but was solicitous to rest his own character on the possession of solid and useful virtues, and accustomed to esteem these wherever he found them in any class of society. With such generous predilections, he united the most disinterested regard for the welfare of others both in private and public. Few indeed ever acted more fully on the great Christian principle, that “none of us liveth to himself.” During the whole period of a busy life, accordingly, he was occupied with offices of benevolence or friendship to orphan families cast upon his care, as well as to others who needed his advice or assistance; and, since his death, many have pronounced over him with tears the highest eulogium—that *they had lost their best friend.* The same generous feelings influenced him as a citizen and a patriot; and it should ever be recollected that his activity in promoting what he believed to be the public good, was not superior, nor even equal to the unwearied assiduity of his private beneficence. Seldom, indeed, has the death of a private citizen left more blanks in important public situations, which it can scarcely be

* His remains were carried to the grave by his tenants, most of whose ancestors had resided on his property from the time when it came into his family, and who thus bore their grateful testimony to the uniform kindness and benevolence which distinguished his character as a landlord,

expected that any single individual can fill. In some of them, it is to be feared, his loss is irretrievable.

What eminently fitted him for such efficient usefulness, was his remarkable decision and promptitude, which led him to form his plans without hesitation, and instantly to engage in their accomplishment with all his energy. He remembered the admonition which his death now addresses to us all,—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” His mind, indeed, possessed the greatest activity; his judgment being quick, penetrating, and inventive, and his fancy peculiarly lively, while both were stimulated by ardent and even impetuous feelings. He had also great natural eloquence corresponding to such mental peculiarities—simple and manly, yet impressive and efficient, as it partook of the energy and openness of his disposition. His most remarkable characteristic, however, was honest ardour of feeling; but it was accompanied with interesting peculiarities, which produced some of his excellencies and defects. It was like the ardour of youth, with much of its affectionate simplicity and openness. To the very last his feelings retained a delightful freshness—free not only from blight or decay, but from all taint of selfishness or suspicion. Even his later friendships had the warmth of early attachments; his opinions of those whom he loved were often too candid and favourable, while his interest in them had the liveliness of first impressions. To his friends, also, he poured out his whole soul, without ceremony or disguise; and he was equally open in expressing disapprobation, or in rectifying their faults. But he encouraged them to treat him with the same cordiality and frankness, while his attachment frequently increased towards those who controverted his opinions, or questioned his plans, when they met him in the spirit of affectionate sincerity.

He carried the same simple sincerity into public life, proposing all his measures with openness, and supporting them directly by argument, without finesse or manœuvring. He met opposition in the same spirit; sometimes with impatience, but always with frankness. He was apt, indeed, to treat public opponents as private friends; perhaps with impetuous bluntness, but with unsuspecting sincerity; while he wished them to use the same freedom towards himself, without diminishing mutual esteem. After such discussions, too, he was ready to listen to private suggestions and explanations, and was often the first to make every concession that was consistent with strict principle. In private life, indeed, his character appeared to most advantage; and there it might be truly said of him, that those who knew him best, loved him most.

In his public conduct, which was distinguished for undeviating consistency, his great object was to improve without destroying any valuable institutions, and always to combine safety with change. He accordingly adopted as the guide of all his actions certain great principles, of the most benignant and generous character. He thought the state should treat all its members as children of the same family, with equal justice and equal favour; consulting, in all its measures, for the welfare of the lowest as well as the highest; and bestowing civil rights and privileges on all, without regard to sect or party. Literature and general knowledge he viewed in the same light; as the common property of society, which should be brought within the reach of all, without any mixture of sectarian peculiarity. He was

equally alive to the honour, independence, and purity of the Church of Christ—solicitous that it should be preserved a sacred society, distinct from the world, and free from all secular control. Whatever may be thought of the correctness of such principles, their generous character must be universally acknowledged; and whatever errors might be committed in applying them to particular cases, respect is surely due to the mind which habitually felt their influence.

As a descendent of the Livingstons, his attachment to Presbyterianism was hereditary; but it rested also on the basis of enlightened conviction, and it extended not merely to the forms, but to the peculiar doctrines of the early Presbyterian Church. Yet whilst conscientiously convinced of these doctrines, and uniformly professing them, *and deeply impressed with their indispensable obligation, and their essential importance to the present and eternal well being of fallen man*, his conduct towards those who differed from him most widely was marked not only with justice and fairness, but with candour and kindness. He was always ready to meet them on common ground—to co-operate with them in all moral duties—and to vindicate their rights, their privileges, and their honour, as members of the community. It was with him a sacred principle never to allow the relations of men in civil society to be in the slightest degree affected by membership in the Christian Church.

His religion, however, was not a mere profession—it influenced his conduct in life, and it supported his soul in death. During his last illness, he took particular delight in devotional exercises, founded on the peculiar views of Christian truth which he had adopted—*feeling the necessity of an Almighty Saviour, and an atoning sacrifice of infinite value, and confiding on these alone as the foundation of his hope*. In such a state of mind, “his latter end was peace.” But it was “peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” He truly “joyed in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”—*Correspondent of the Guardian*.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Friend of Youth; or, Sabbath-school Monthly Visitor. Published by WILLIAM M'COMB, Belfast.

The first Number of this interesting little periodical appeared on the 1st of March. It contains a neat steel engraved portrait of Mr. Gall, the well known author of “the Lesson System,” and its pages are illustrated with a variety of appropriate wood-cuts. The matter also is good. The publisher has made a promising commencement, and should subsequent numbers, as we doubt not they will, prove equally attractive, we venture to predict that the “*Friend of Youth*,” will soon become a very general favourite with youth.